



Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
John R. Griffin, Secretary
Joseph P. Gill, Deputy Secretary

To: SFAC Commissioners
From: MDNR Fisheries Service
RE: Invasive Species Penalty
Date: 1/15/13

Commission Members,

In light of growing concerns of intentional movement of invasive species in Maryland, MDNR has been working with the members of the Chesapeake Bay Commission (CBC) to improve penalties related to introducing nuisance organisms in our region.

In attempting to address these concerns and add a further deterrent, the CBC would like to introduce a bill during the 2013 Maryland General Assembly Session that would increase penalties for moving nuisance organisms. Currently, Natural Resource Article, §4-205.1, caps a fine for spreading nuisance organisms at \$2500. The proposed bill would clarify that the \$2500 fine was per organism. So each organism that was transported or possessed in violation of the law would be subject to a \$2500 fine. Additionally, the proposed bill would provide a judge with discretion to award an informant with half the fines imposed on the violator, if the informant provides information that leads to a conviction.

MDNR agrees that these measures would provide a greater deterrence to violating the law and a greater incentive for individuals to assist in the upholding of the law. Please see the accompanying background material on the subject of invasive species penalties and bill draft.

The CBC would like to receive input from SFAC on this proposed bill prior to introducing the legislation. Please respond to Marty Gary via email by **January 25th** if the concept provides you concern so we can inform CBC. The Commission may have a formal discussion and vote at the February 5th meeting, but early comment would be appreciated by CBC.